

April 6, 2020

St. Louis County Department of Public Health COVID-19 Update

Immediate Need for Cloth Masks

Due to the national and global span of the pandemic, traditional supply chains of personal protective equipment (PPE) are being exhausted. The St. Louis County Department of Public Health (DPH) has evaluated its inventory and there is concern that the supply of masks will not be sufficient enough to satisfy the demand required for the duration of the pandemic. DPH is seeking immediate assistance in gathering cloth masks.

The cloth masks will be worn by those serving in supportive and in-direct roles, thereby preserving much needed N-95 masks for the healthcare workers and first responders who must work in direct contact with those confirmed to have COVID-19. The CDC notes that homemade masks are not considered PPE, as their capability to protect health care professionals is unknown, but this option is a better option than no option.

The CDC has directions for making two types of cloth masks, one that does not require sewing and one that does. Both types can be made out of items found in your home. For more information visit: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html.

If you or your organization is able to provide cloth masks, please email EOCdonations@stlouisco.com.

Caring for Another at Home

Individuals that are caring for family, friends, or other individuals who are suspected of, or have been confirmed by testing to have COVID-19 should follow all of the aforementioned precautions. They should also be monitoring their own health for signs of symptoms. Further measures for care providers include

- Understand the orders for the patient that have been provided by the care provider and the department of health. You will be responsible for providing for the patient's basic needs. Discuss any questions with your health care provider or DPH representative.
- Do not reuse masks and gloves. Remove them using the following procedure: remove gloves first, wash hands, remove mask, wash hands.
- Maintain personal hygiene standards to prevent transmission including frequent hand hygiene. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Both you and the patient should wear masks when in the same room.
- Wash laundry thoroughly. Wear gloves while handling laundry, then throw the gloves away, and wash hands when finished.

- Place all disposable gloves, facemasks, and any other contaminated items in a lined container before disposing of them with other household waste. Wash hands immediately after handling these items.

Contact Information

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services hotline can be reached at (877)435-8411.

St. Louis County has created a website dedicated to the dissemination of information relating to COVID-19, www.stlcorona.com. Please visit that website or those belonging to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) or the World Health Organization (WHO) for the most current and reputable information.



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